IN THE CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) An intervertebral spacer device, comprising:

first and second plate members, each having plate surfaces thereof, said plate members being disposed in a spaced apart relationship such that inner ones of said plate surfaces oppose one another, and external ones of said plate surfaces face in opposite directions;

and at least one slotted domed arch strip spring restoring force providing element disposed between the inner surfaces of said first and second plate members, and disposed such that a compressive load applied to the external surfaces of said plate members is counteracted by said at least one slotted domed arch strip spring restoring force providing element, said at least one slotted domed arch strip spring having a longitudinal axis and one or more slots formed therein that extend generally perpendicular to the longitudinal axis of said at least one slotted domed arch strip spring.

2. (original) The device as set forth in claim 1, wherein at least one of said external surfaces of said first and second plate members comprises a porous coating.

3. (original) The device as set forth in claim 1, wherein said second plate member further comprises

a post structure rising off the inner surface thereof, and which post structure includes a ball-shaped head.

4. (original) The device as set forth in claim 3, wherein said post structure further includes a threaded bore which extends axially from said ball-shaped head downwardly, and which

bore receives therein a threaded set screw such that prior to insertion of the set screw therein, said bore permits the ball-shaped head to compress radially inwardly, and such that after the insertion of said set screw said ball-shaped head is not readily radially compressible.

5. (original) The device as set forth in claim 4, wherein said at least one slotted domed arch strip spring further comprises a central opening which includes a curvate volume for receiving and holding therein said ball-shaped head.

6. (currently amended) An intervertebral spacer device, comprising:

first and second plate members, each having plate surfaces thereof, said plate members being disposed in a spaced apart relationship such that inner ones of said plate surfaces oppose one another, and external ones of said plate surfaces face in opposite directions;

said second plate member further including a post structure rising off the inner surface thereof, and which post structure includes a ball-shaped head; and

a slotted domed arch strip spring, having a central peak portion, said peak portion including a central opening which includes a curvate volume for receiving and holding therein said ball-shaped head, said slotted domed arch strip spring having lateral ends secured to said second plate.

such that a compressive load applied to the external surfaces of said plate members is counteracted by a restoring force of said slotted domed arch strip spring.

7. (original) The device as set forth in claim 6, wherein said post structure further comprises a threaded bore which extends axially from said ball-shaped head downwardly, and which

bore receives therein a threaded set screw such that prior to insertion of the set screw therein, said bore permits the ball-shaped head to compress radially inwardly, and such that after the insertion of said set screw said ball-shaped head is not readily radially compressible.